

[P.246-A]

184 ostensibly between the group of males sitting
621 together around a campfire. The net-hunting
562 band, then, consists of men and women. There
is no hint of any opposition between the individual family and the band.

601 That there is virtually a total absence of any data on kinship terminology is in itself significant. Apparently a classificatory system, if one exists, is in extremely simple form, reduced to generational levels (grandchildren and grandparents, children and parents, and siblings) for each sex. There is no evidence that special terms are used to distinguish between, say, a patrilineal and a matrilineal grandparent. Also, when referring to his wife's brother's child in KENgwana, an Mbuti calls him, if he uses a term at all, *muloto*, whereas an Ngwana uses the reciprocal term *muyomba*. But, more frequently, the Mbuti use personal names, distinguished when there is possibility of confusion either by the addition of the name of the patrilineal grandfather (not the ancestor) or by the substitution of a name in another language.

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- 551 Thus in the Epulu region most Mbuti have both Ngwana and Bira names, not necessarily with the same meaning. The occasional use of a grandfather's name is another indication of the lack of importance attached to lineal ties in this group, and an indication of the size of the largest group to which they conceive of themselves as belonging. Clan names (ancestor names) exist, but these seem to have little social significance. Place names are used frequently to differentiate one hunting band from another.
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 - [101]
 - 621 It is virtually impossible to distinguish any of the alien families that have attached themselves to a net-hunting band, so completely are they assimilated. Perhaps the easiest indication would be open flirtation between members of the opposite sex within a hunting band. And finally (see below, p. 257, for a fuller treatment), there is the *elima*, the women's religious association which unites the women of the band in opposition to the men (regardless of lineage), and at the same time acknowledges the common values of both, so unites them as a single group in relation to the forest. It also unifies the total band in relationship to the worlds of spirits, animals, villagers, and presumably of other semi-human beings such as Europeans. It never unifies the band in opposition to other hunting bands or lineages.
 - [186]
- [P. 246-B]

THE BAND

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social groupings within the camp. Plan 8^A offers a dramatic example⁶² of the kind of major change that can take place in any one camp,³⁶ and of the kind of change that may lead to ultimate fission, and that is certainly likely to determine one of the lines of cleavage when fission⁶⁶ does take place. The change was brought about by the arrival of a controversial sometime member of the band, Cephu.⁵

The camp was already settled at optimum-to-maximum size when,⁶² on the fifth day, Cephu arrived. He used to migrate from his natal³⁶ band to this one, and was not overly welcome in either. He arrived⁵⁷⁸ by stealth with his father's brother's son, and their families pitched⁶¹⁴ their belongings in a small clearing near the main camp. They were⁶⁶⁶ joined by a member of the important Puemi clan of the main camp, whose wife was friendly with Cephu's womenfolk. Their camp established, they opened a trail leading directly into the main camp. The various reactions, seen in Plan 7, effected a consolidation of the southwest corner of the main camp and caused a rift between two sets of brothers: M and N (N having joined Cephu while M pointedly rebuilt a new hut in the main camp), and D and I, D setting up with Cephu, his brother I and nephew J refusing to leave the main camp and join him.

Even more important, the consolidation of the southwest and, to some extent, the southeast corner of the main camp involved the southward realignment of S, T and U, S and U being highly influential elders, T being one of the greatest hunters. T and U were members of one section of the dominant Puemi clan, the other section being localized in the north part of the camp.

Plans 9 and 10^B illustrate the rather more radical change that may⁶² take place, effecting a temporary consolidation of lineages. Such³⁶ changes within a camp are extremely rare however—in this case the⁶¹³ consolidation was of the lineages concerned in a vital dispute against⁵⁷⁸ one of their members, the same controversial Cephu guilty of a serious hunting crime. Table 4 gives the relevant kinship structure for this particular camp, and Table 5 gives the complete list of lineages, as far as I could trace them, with indications as to which individuals were effective members of the Epulu band during the year.⁵

⁵ I use personal names that were used in the forest, though some Mbuti use different names when in the village. It is perhaps significant that Cephu is a common name among the ill-considered Ngwana, and that Cephu's children were also mostly known by villager names or even by European names, such as "Teresa," currently in vogue among the villagers. Any one Mbuti might be known by as many as four names, certainly two or three. The names used here correspond to those used elsewhere (Turnbull, 1961) from which source some additional information on the personalities involved may be gleaned.

A, B [see pages 358-359 respectively -- Analyst]

C [see pages 393 A-F; 326 -- Analyst]

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villagers, instead of using the appropriate village term, *kola*, they are apt to bring in the concept of relative age and specify *alwa'e na epa* or *moto e na epa*. For, not themselves distinguishing between cross and parallel relationships, the Mbuti see that the villagers refer to their mother's sisters according to their relative age (*om-ema* or *mot-ema*), and to the Mbuti this age differential is of recognizable significance.

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In their own usage, however, their father's sisters and their mother's sisters are all equally *ema*, as are indeed any unrelated females who fall into that age group. So with other terms, for with the Mbuti age rather than kinship is the determining factor. I have known a man with a brother much younger than he refer to him as *miki*, and the younger brother refer to his older brother as *epa*. The older brother at that time was a married man and a great hunter; the younger brother was single and not yet a net-owner and not a great hunter. Their activities were therefore different, and each assumed the "kinship" term that included him in his appropriate economic age group.

There are appropriate corresponding structural differences between villagers and Mbuti; for instance, an orphaned child among the villagers is taken in by his father's brothers, with precedence being given to the older brother. Among the Mbuti a child may be adopted by any "father" or "mother," which effectively means anyone of the same age group as his biological parents. Generally a boy or girl goes to live with his mother and her natal family if his father dies, and stays with his father, living with one of his father's married brothers, if his mother dies. This is assuming that the marriage has been patrilocal; if it has been matrilineal, as it frequently is, the reverse applies. But in every case there is great freedom of choice, and each instance is decided according to the context of the moment.

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It is plain, then, that the personal terminology of the Mbuti stresses their relative age and economic status rather than their kinship, and both for address and reference it is used mostly in economic contexts, personal names being most widely used in other contexts. The only time that biological kinship becomes an important factor in discussion is in connection with sex and marriage. Relationships are then spelled out and traced through the "stomachs" from which the individuals concerned are born. People who are related through the stomachs of their mother or of their father's mother may not marry or have extramarital sexual relationships. This is the one and only

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THE WORLD OF THE FOREST

in one way. They are submissive, almost servile, and appear to have
no culture of their own. But at night in the initiation camp when
the last Negro had left, or off in the forest, those same Pygmies
were different people. They cast off one way of life and took on an-
other, and from the little I saw of their forest life it was as full and
satisfactory as village life seemed empty and meaningless.

The Pygmies are no more perfect than any other people, and life,
though kind to them, is not without hardships. But there was some-
thing about the relationship between these simple, unaffected people
and their forest home that was captivating. And when the time
came that I had to leave, even though we were camped back near
the village, the Pygmies gathered around their fire on the eve of my
departure and sang their forest songs for me; and for the first time
I heard the voice of the molimo. Then I was sure that I could never
rest until I had come out again, free of any obligations to stay in
the village, free of any limitations of time, free simply to live and
roam the forest with the BaMbuti, its people; and free to let them
teach me in their own time what it was that made their life so dif-
ferent from that of other people.

The evening before I left, before the singing started, three of
the great hunters took me off into the forest. They said they wanted
to be sure that I would come back again, so they thought they would
make me "of the forest." There was Njobo, the killer of elephants;
his close friend and distant relative, Kolongo; and Moke, an elderly
Pygmy who never raised his voice, and to whom everyone listened
with respect. Kolongo held my head and Njobo casually took a rusty
arrow blade and cut tiny but deep vertical slits in the center of my
forehead and above each eye. He then gauged out a little flesh from
each slit and asked Kolongo for the medicine to put in. But Kolongo
had forgotten to bring it, so while I sat on a log, not feeling very
bright, Kolongo ambled off to get the medicine, and Moke wandered
around cheerfully humming to himself, looking for something to eat.

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One of them, a youth called Kenge, had
115 even become bugler at the Animal Station, where almost every hour
177 the air was shattered with attempts at military bugle calls.

- 464 Kenge's father had died a number of years ago, when he was just
• [55] a boy. His mother had returned to her village, but Kenge had stayed
around Camp Putnam. Pat Putnam encouraged him to become a
jack-of-all-trades, and Kenge had come to spend more time at the
camp than in the forest. He even learned the work of hotel boy, such
as pressing clothes for Putnam's guests. He wore shorts and shirt,
meticulously scrubbed and pressed with the Camp Putnam flatiron,
but usually without buttons. He was very sophisticated and a little
conceited, but a good friend to me at all times, and eventually he
made himself indispensable.

115 During my last trip Kenge had been with me practically the whole
123 time; since no women were allowed in the initiation camp, he helped
with the cooking, and he had told me how to behave. He tried to
interpret my questions to the others, for he had a better idea than
most Pygmies of the peculiar sorts of things that Europeans want to
know. Such things to an African are often forbidden topics of conver-
sation and even to mention them would be grossly indiscreet or even
insulting. Kenge became so familiar with the kind of questions I liked
to ask that he would even conduct inquiries in my absence, then tell
me what he had discovered about so-and-so's mother's brother's
daughter. But for all his sophistication, what he liked best was to
take me through the forest, as though he owned it personally, show-
ing it to me with infinite pride.

He had insisted on working for me, and I had fired him regularly
every two or three weeks, because, sophisticated or not, he was as
unpredictable as any Pygmy, and just as disinclined to do anything
he did not want to do. Several times he announced that he was going
to get food for my supper, and I would give him the money to buy
something special in the village. Of course he would go straight to
the beer house and leave me to scrounge what I could. I soon learned

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115 Pygmy and said he didn't mind. He suggested 40 francs per week,
123 a wage considerably below what he had been earning as a bugler. He said that if I could afford a present when I left, that would be fine. Pygmies have a way of letting you know when they really mean what they say, and this was one of those times. In all the many months that followed, Kenge never once asked me for money, beyond his meager salary. And once when I was short of cash and we were down in the village he spent his own savings to buy food for the two of us.

123 In the course of my two previous trips I had come to know most of the Pygmies in this area quite well, and the initiation had cemented our friendship, though at the best I suspect they regarded me merely as a rather harmless outsider. I was soon brought up to date on all
177 that happened during the past three years. Kenge said that the hunt-
1464 ing group was still hunting and gathering, but that they sometimes
1434 came down to the village and spent time there, earning money at the Station de Chasse or at the motel, money which they promptly spent on food, tobacco, and palm wine at the new stores. They still brought in meat for their *BaKpara*, or "masters," and took plantation
177 foods in return. But, encouraged by the administration, they had
241 begun to make their own plantation in the forest. This was the worst possible news; once the Pygmies have plantations their hunting-and-gathering existence is made impossible. They become tied to one place and do not have time to follow the game.

241 The two busiest workers on the plantation and those who had the
156 finest clearings were Njobo and Masisi. They were two of the most
551 influential hunters of the group. Njobo had killed two elephants
224 single-handed, and two more in company with other Pygmies. He had three wives, but had only one child, a son by his second wife. The son, Nyange, had been a healthy lad when I had last seen him, but now he was crippled with tuberculosis of the leg bone.

156 Masisi was a relative of Njobo's, and though not such a renowned

THE GOOD DEATH OF BALEKIMITO

hunter he was blessed with a large family. He had a powerful and penetrating voice, took an active part in any dispute, and usually managed to shout his opponents down, which is one of the chief ways the Pygmies have of settling a dispute. His family were all strikingly fine-looking, with almost Greek-like appearance although of normal Pygmy stature—under four and a half feet.

Most Pygmies have unmistakable features, other than height, that set them apart from the Negroes. Their legs are short in proportion to their bodies; they are powerful, muscular, and usually splay-backed; their heads are round and the eyes are set wide apart; they have flat noses almost as broad as their mouths are long. The head hair grows in peppercorn tufts, and the body hair varies from one extreme to the other—some Pygmies are covered thickly from head to foot. Another characteristic is the alert expression of the face, direct and unafraid, as keen as the body, which is always ready to move with speed and agility at a moment's notice. All these traits are uncharacteristic of the Negro tribes that live in the forest around the Pygmies. These tribes are a rather shifty, lazy lot who survived the ravages of Tippu Tip's slave-traders by treachery and deceit. In the villages you will sometimes find Pygmies who are like this too, but they are scorned by the BaMbuti who have remained in the forest and have refused to be settled.

Masisi's children had finer features, with longer faces and straight noses, and they were slimmer and less stocky. His eldest son, Ageronga, was a fine hunter and often used to take his father's place.

Another member of the same clan, a cousin of Masisi's, was Manyalibo. A traditionalist, he was older than Masisi, and the son of an elder brother of Masisi's father, yet he had less say in everyday matters because he was not such an active hunter. Nor did he have such a fine family. He had two daughters of his own, but no sons, and although he had adopted a distant nephew, Madyadya, the boy was proving a great trial, having been spoiled by everyone, as orphans

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156 usually are. Both Manyalibo and his wife were great humorists, and
[522] they made use of the powers of ridicule to break up some of the
[626] more serious disputes, because there is nothing that upsets a Pygmy
more than being laughed at.

- [551] The oldest member of the group, a member of the same family
though even more distantly related, was old Tungana, who had so
many children and grandchildren that neither he nor his wife could
156 remember all their names. Strangely enough, he was a progressive
177 Pygmy, and whereas Manyalibo was constantly decrying the Pygmy
888 plantation in his deep bass voice, Tungana thought it was fine. He
also thought living near the village was a good thing as there was
so much good food to be had for the stealing. And wasn't stealing
easier than hunting? I think the truth was that poor old Tungana was
getting too old to follow the hunting band with ease, and he was
afraid of being abandoned. In fact, he often remained behind in the
village when the rest were far off in the forest, and one of his many
sons would come in every few days bringing the old couple gifts of
meat and forest fruits.

[551] Moke was another of the elders. He claimed a fictional relation-
[608] ship with Tungana because it made him feel at home, since he had
no real relatives in the group other than his own children. Moke was
the greatest traditionalist of all, and when the Pygmy plantations
were mentioned in front of him he just laughed dryly to himself
and smiled his toothless smile, saying he had not tasted any Pygmy
bananas yet, but if any grew then he would be glad to eat them.

156 It was Moke who had come with Kolongo and Njobo to cut the
marks on my forehead three years earlier. Kolongo had been as much
of a traditionalist as Moke, as indeed were all his family, particularly
the wizened old mother, Balekimito, and his oldest sister, Asofalinda,
who was now a widow and thoroughly enjoying her freedom. Moke
had thought of her as a companion for his old age, but Asofalinda
liked life as it was, so Moke was still a widower and she a widow.

THE GOOD DEATH OF BALEKIMITO

The leader of this group—although with Pygmies it is always un-¹⁵⁶
wise to talk of single "leaders"—was a wily but rather naïve Pygmy ⁶²¹
by the name of Cephu. Most Pygmies use their real names among ⁵⁵¹
themselves, but they all have additional names, in KiNgwana, by
which they are known to the Negroes. Cephu always used his
KiNgwana name, pronounced just slightly differently from the Negro
equivalent, Sefu. No matter what language they are speaking, the ^[194]
Pygmies always retain their own peculiar intonation, which renders
the language almost incomprehensible to non-Pygmies.

Cephu's family was large, but not large enough, even with all his ¹⁵⁶
in-laws, to form a hunting group of his own. To do this you have ⁵⁷¹
to have at the very least six or seven individual families, each with ⁶²¹
its own hunting net; only in this way can you have an efficient net-
hunt, with the women and children driving the animals into the long
circle of nets, joined end to end. Cephu's group was usually not more
than four families, and so he tacked himself onto Njobo and Ekianga.
Sometimes this worked out well enough, as Pygmies are great people ^[574]
for visiting their relatives, and one or the other group might be
depleted by absences. But at other times they would have a number
of families visiting them, and then the addition of Cephu and all his
relatives made the whole group far too large and unwieldy. But as he
had taken the precaution of exchanging sisters, he could not be
refused, and so he would make his own little camp close by connected
by a narrow trail. He would follow the others whenever they went
hunting and was invariably blamed when the hunt was not a success.
At night he and his family kept to themselves, seldom venturing
into the main camp. They sat around their own fire, offended, aloof,
and rather unhappy, but with hides as tough as that of a forest buffalo
and impervious to the most obvious hints and thinly veiled insults.
But Cephu was the best storyteller in the forest. ^[538]

Kenge's position in the group was an undefined and rather happy ¹¹⁵
one. His father had married a sister of Njobo and joined his wife's ⁶⁰²

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

stalled themselves with the rest of the family at the north end of the camp. Shortly afterward Cephu arrived. Ekianga had brought news that he was on his way, and there had been a lot of argument. In spite of the auspicious killing of a sondu on the first day, the hunting since had not been very good, and already the camp was large. There were about twenty-five huts now, forming two circles, one on each side of the central barrier of brush and trees.

In the early afternoon there was a silence in the camp and Kenge stood listening, looking across the camp to the south. He turned and told me that Cephu was not far away and would be here in a quarter of an hour. Almost to the minute Cephu arrived, leading a band of another five families. Most of them stopped at the edge of the camp at the south end; only Cephu and one other came over to the main camp to greet us and announce his arrival. A new fire had been built in the center of our clearing, opposite Manyalibo's hut, and Cephu sat down there, one of the younger men getting up to give him his chair. He asked about the hunting and gave us news of the village. He said that his brother, who was a cripple, had not wanted to come so far and had made a small camp half way, near Apa Kadiketu. After a few minutes he left, not having been offered anything to eat or any tobacco to smoke, and started building his own camp about fifty yards to the south of the extreme edge of the clearing. He built a tight little circle of huts, connected by a path to the main trail on one side and to the camp on the other. He chose that site because he had some relatives at that end of our camp.

The same day Manyalibo's daughter also arrived, with her husband, Ausu. Ausu was a handsome Pygmy, strong, and clever at hunting both with spear and with net. He had caught many wild pig, although he was only in his early twenties, and once, when still in his teens, he had nearly been killed by one. His wife, Kondabate, was a Pygmy belle if there ever was one, and she knew it. The two had been married for nearly three years but had no children. Kon-

THE SONG OF THE FOREST

more than a hundred feet up. "That is where it sleeps," he said. 765
"It is safe there. It sleeps there until it is needed." 534
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I asked when it was needed, but Maïpe had said all he was going to say. He looked up at the tree for a last time, then motioned with his head that we should be on our way. Kenge whispered to me that 765
when we got back he would ask Moke to tell me more. It was better 534
for old men to talk about these things. 123
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That same night, just before the singing started, Moke was sitting 888
outside his hut, whittling away at a new bow he was making, and 322
talking to himself because there was nobody else for him to talk to. 411
Kenge had spoken to him when we got back to the camp at dusk, but I did not expect anything to come of it, and Kenge had said nothing to me. Moke looked up and stared in my direction, then he looked back at his bow and continued whittling away with a rough stone. But he spoke a little louder, so that I would hear.

"Ebamunyama," he said, using the name I had been given, "pi- [55] -
ka'i to." ("Come here.")

He spoke as if he was addressing the bow, and when I got to him he still did not look up but just told me to sit down. Talking to the bow in his soft old voice, he said that he had been told I was asking about the molimo, and that this was a good thing and he would tell me whatever he could.

He went on to tell that the Pygmies call out their molimo whenever things seem to be going wrong. "It may be that the hunting is bad," he said, "or that someone is ill, or, as now, that someone has died. These are not good things, and we like things to be good. So we call out the molimo and it makes them good, as they should be."

Kind, quiet old Moke, all alone and without a wife to look after 115
him, still working away at his bow, occasionally looking along the 157
shank to make sure he was keeping the line true—he told me many things that evening. But, most important, he told me, or rather

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BALÉSE

The major village tribe to the east and northeast of the Epulu district.

BAMBUTI

General term for all Pygmies of the Ituri Forest.

BANGWANA

An Islamic tribe scattered throughout the area. Their unsavory reputation, acquired in the days when they aided and abetted the slave-traders, has continued right up to the present day. KiNgwana has become the lingua franca of the entire area.

BANJA

A pair of short sticks, split into many strands at one end and clapped together on a log as rhythmic accompaniment to certain songs of the Pygmies, particularly the *molimo* songs.

BANTU

General term for all tribes speaking a certain type of language, characterized by the use of prefixes, as indicated under BaBira, above, etc. The Bantu peoples extend throughout eastern, southern, and central Africa.

BARAZA

The meeting place of a family or village. Sometimes a large veranda built onto a house; more often a separate building consisting of a roof supported by poles, but with no walls.

DAWA

"Medicine"; may refer to effective herbs or equally to magical incantations or spells.

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EBAMUNYAMA

Literally, "His Father Killed an Animal"; the name which the Pygmies gave to me, being their condensation of the story that I told to explain my name, "Turnbull." (A borderland Scot saved the king's life by leaping on the back of a bull and turning it away from the king by twisting its

GLOSSARY

- neck. The family was rewarded with the title "Turner of the Bull," and with a crest of a bull with a broken neck.)
- ELIMA** The festival celebrating the puberty of girls.
- FITO** A young straight sapling, up to twelve feet in length, used in the construction of house frames, also as whips during certain ceremonies.
- ITABA** A sweet root found only in the forest, considered a delicacy by the Pygmies.
- KANGAY** The gardenia fruit, used by Pygmies to extract a black juice used for staining the body or for drawing patterns on bark cloth.
- KENGE** An antelope, sometimes an okapi; such names are occasionally, but not often, given to children, as in the case of my helper and friend.
- KUMAMOLIMO** "The heart of the *molimo*"—the central meeting place of the men's religious organization.
- LENDU** A forest antelope, the size of a large dog, with sharp-pointed horns.
- LIKO** A brew made by the Pygmies of forest berries, herbs, and cola nut.
- MACHETTI** A large-bladed knife used for cutting fito, etc.
- MANGESE** The Pygmy term, also used by some BaBira, for the elders. As used by Pygmies it can also refer to a youngster, if he has shown himself to be a "Great One" by some spectacular hunting achievement, say killing a buffalo or an elephant single-handed.